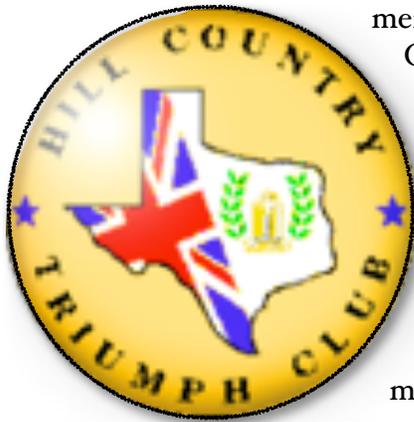


# THE RAGTOP

## WELCOME TO THE CLUB

by STEVE JOHNSON, PRESIDENT

It's April and we are very close to the opening of the 2009 VTR South Central Regional we are hosting. Although we have 54 cars already registered, we do not have many



members of the Hill Country Triumph Club Registered. This is a very special event especially this year since we are hosting it. There are a number of you that promised to help during this event. Send me a note with the days you will be at the Regional, and if you can help. Helping and

participating is a lot of fun that you can easily experience right here in Marble Falls. *It would be a shame if you missed it, and weren't able to support the club.*

We need volunteers in several areas. For example you could use your expertise to help Roger Bolick as a judge for the Concourse. You could help Mike McPhail with the Stone Mountain Slalom, showing the cars where to line up. Or you could help Don Couch and his team with the Autocross. There's no better way to experience the events than helping if you aren't driving them. Everyone will be able to do some participation and some helping. The best of both worlds. Try it once and you'll be hooked on it like I am.



Those who wish to volunteer to help at the Regional can get in touch with me at [stevenjohnson7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stevenjohnson7@sbcglobal.net), or call on 512-258-5340. I'll explain what's needed, and how easy it is to actually participate.

There is still time to Pre-Register. *Please register as soon as possible* so that we can do the proper planning for you. <http://www.hillcountrytriumphclub.org/vtr/index.html>.

**Yoakum Run** - On March 29<sup>th</sup> seven cars met at Ferrellgas on 183 in South Austin, and had a wonderful drive to Yoakum Texas to have burgers and all the fixings at Carol Pennington and Mars' ranch in Yoakum Texas. What a ride through the beautiful Texas Hill Country.

Carol's TR3A had lost the pin out of the right leaf spring. She had so many mechanics on the car wrenching that it was a flurry of elbows. Mike

continued on page 2

continued from page 1

McPhail got the prize for finally getting into Its proper position, and Carol was a happy camper. One more back on the road. **Yeah!**

But then again we had another one off the road. Isn't that the way it works. Warren and Yolanda blew the engine on their TR6 on the way home. The patient is recovering slowly.

Here are pictures... <https://cid-6ce2a9bcdob2a50c.skydrive.live.com/browse.aspx/New%20ofolder?ct=photos>



### THE YOAKUM RUNNERS

Carol and Mars	TR3A
Warren and Yolanda	TR6
Mike and Nel	TR3A
Bob Baker-Mark Brannon	TR250
Baker's Friend Jim Franke	S2000
Dean and Elizabeth	TR4
Herb & Cynthia Valliant	TR7
Steve and Candy	TR4A

**Blanco Classic Car Show** – The Drive in May is to the 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Blanco Classic Car Show. It's on May 16<sup>th</sup> so make your calendars now. They will have Dash Plaques, T-Shirts, and awards. This show caters more to Hot Rods than to our British Classics. It's a great drive with beautiful views of the Hill Country. Mike McPhail will be putting it together for us again this year. Look for Details in upcoming issues of the Ragtop. I attached the Registration Form to this Ragtop.

Like I said, If you have any questions at all, just send me a note, or call me. We are looking forward to seeing each of you at the Regional. You don't have to drive your Triumph to join us at the next Club Meeting on April 14<sup>th</sup>. It will be held at the Rudy's Bar-B-Q at around 620 and 2222.

Triumphantly Yours,

*STEVE*

Steve Johnson  
 President,  
 Hill Country Triumph Club

**The Hill Country Triumph Club**, the 50th Chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR), was founded in 1990 to bring together the owners of Triumph automobiles in the Central Texas area surrounding Austin. In 1991, the membership decided to include other British car fans as associates due to lack of other clubs in our area that represent some of the other marques. As owners and lovers of our unique types of cars, we have a special kinship, which draws us together. Membership is open to anyone who is a British car enthusiast, with or without a car.

Annual dues are just \$15.00 per family group or address per year. We have dinner meetings on the 2nd Tuesday of each month and at least one other event each month. We encourage you to join and support us, even if you don't drive your car regularly. We also offer technical assistance if needed. One goal of the club is to help its members keep their cars on the road. Please call one of the club officers listed in the newsletter for more information about club benefits and spread the word about our club to others.

The Hill Country Club is a local chapter of the Vintage Triumph Register (VTR)/Triumph Sports Owners Association, which is open to all drivers of Triumph motorcars; a chapter of the Triumph Register of America, exclusively for TR2 through TR4A sports cars; and a chapter of the 6-PACK, dedicated to the enjoyment, preservation, and restoration of the Triumph TR250 and TR6 sports cars. Membership in these national organizations is encouraged. Visit their websites at [www.vtr.org](http://www.vtr.org), [www.triumphregister.com](http://www.triumphregister.com), and [www.6-pack.org](http://www.6-pack.org).

The RAGTOP is published monthly by the Hill Country Triumph Club. Material within may be freely reproduced providing Ragtop and the authors are credited. Any and all newsletter contributions are welcome. Deadline for submissions is the end of each month. Submissions may be emailed to [don@dcphotos.com](mailto:don@dcphotos.com) Car related classified ads are free to members and will run for three months unless otherwise instructed. Contact editor for other ads.

**OFFICERS**



**President**  
Steve Johnson  
258.5340

[stevenjohnson7@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stevenjohnson7@sbcglobal.net)

**Vice-President**

Bob Baker  
448.0093  
[bcbaker@austin.rr.com](mailto:bcbaker@austin.rr.com)  
**Treasurer**

**Earl McGlothlin**

292.3387  
[conniemcg@austin.rr.com](mailto:conniemcg@austin.rr.com)

**Secretary**

Bob Skewis  
892.4068  
[skewistx@att.net](mailto:skewistx@att.net)

**Membership**

Nel Mcphail  
656.1456  
[nmcpmail@austin.rr.com](mailto:nmcpmail@austin.rr.com)

**Ragtop Editor**

Don Couch  
680-3540  
[don@dcphotos.com](mailto:don@dcphotos.com)  
[www.dcphotos.com](http://www.dcphotos.com)

**Webmaster**

Dan Julien  
451.3102  
[dan.julien@alumni.utexas.net](mailto:dan.julien@alumni.utexas.net)

Membership Application

☞ Name : .....

☞ Address : .....

☞ City / State : ..... ☞ Zip : .....

☞ Home Phone : .....

☞ Work Phone : .....

☞ E-mail address : .....

☞ Car Make : ..... ☞ Model : ..... ☞ Year : ..... ☞ Color : .....

☞ Car Make : ..... ☞ Model : ..... ☞ Year : ..... ☞ Color : .....

☞ How did you hear about the Hill Country Triumph Club? .....

☞ Please mail application and check payable HCTC to :

Nel McPhail, 1105 N. Canyonwood Dr., Dripping Springs, TX, 78260



# FROM THE EDITOR



In a few weeks, TRIUMPH owners from all over will converge onto Marble Falls for the 2009 Vintage Triumph Register South Central Regional Convention. As I'm sure you are aware, The Hill Country Triumph Club is hosting the event.

Well, you gotta know if the HCTC has anything to do with it, it will be one not to be missed! If you have never been to a regional or it has been a few years, drop all other plans you may have and head on out to Marble Falls. From the concours, Autocross and the inaugural running of

the Stone Mountain Slalom to the Bluebonnet Run and Funkana there should be something for all. Even if you don't have a Triumph just yet, come on out and maybe see some friends you may have not seen in some time or make some new ones. So get that registration form filled out and send it on to Nel or bring it to next Tuesday's meeting at Rudy's BBQ. Also, I'd like to thank Phil Auldridge, Bob Skewis Greg Blake and Mike McPhail for contributing to this month's Ragtop, you guys ROCK!

## Don

## TRIUMPH LIFE PRESERVER

*A gathering of helpful hints from like minded gear heads, to keep you afloat.*



Tired of having barely visible instrument panel lights at night in your vintage British car? Why not consider updating your bulbs to new LED technology. Advantages of the LED bulbs are:

- 1) Average life of 60,000 hours
- 2) they generate very little heat
- 3) use less power than standard incandescent bulbs
- 4) much brighter, with a clean blue-white light (or any other color of the rainbow as desired)

There are a number of websites where you can purchase standard automobile screw-base (E10) or bayonet-based bulbs.

Although the bulbs are more expensive (\$2 - \$5 each), they do generally never need replacement.

I replaced the screw-based instrument panel bulbs in my MGA with cool-white ones. Amazing the difference in brightness, and the non-yellow color looks much better. Next I replaced all the panel lights in my '72 BMW coupe with blue bayonet bulbs. It really gives the coupe a more modern feel.

One good source for automotive-style bulbs is [www.LedLight.com](http://www.LedLight.com)

One caution: Although exterior lights, such as brake and turn-signal, can be replaced with brighter LED bulbs also, some older turn-signal circuitry rely on the higher resistance of incandescent bulbs to "fire" the flashing mechanism. LED bulbs provide very little resistance, and therefore may not work trigger the turn signal relay.

## Phil Auldridge

**Please give us your favorite tech tip and We will share it with the club.**

## VTR South Central Regional

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

#### Wednesday – April 22

5:00 PM - 8:00 PM Registration and Hospitality

#### Thursday – April 23

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM Breakfast Run #1\*

9:00 AM - 1:00 PM Texas BBQ Rallye - TSD \*

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch

8:00 AM - 8:00 PM Car Wash

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Stone Mountain Slalom \*

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Bluebonnet Run - Gimmick \*

(Also available on Sat.)

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM Welcome Party



Registration/Hospitality (8:00 AM to 6:00 PM) (8:00 PM – 9:00 PM)

#### Friday – April 24

7:00 AM - 9:00 AM Breakfast Run #2\*

8:00 AM - 12:00 PM Car Wash

9:00 AM - 12:00 PM Funkhana \* - Pavilion

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Concours Judges Lunch

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch

1:00 PM - 2:00 PM Concours Parking - Pavilion

2:00 PM - 5:00 PM Concours - Pavilion

4:00 PM - 5:00 PM Autocross Tech Session – Pavilion

Registration/Hospitality 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM

#### Saturday – April 25

8:00 AM - 9:00 AM Autocross Tech & Meeting - Marble Falls HS

9:00 AM - 2:00 PM Autocross \* - Marble Falls HS

12:00 PM - 1:00 PM Lunch

2:30 PM - 5:00 PM Bluebonnet Run - Gimmick\*

6:00 PM - 7:00 PM Awards Banquet - Happy Hour

7:00 PM Dinner & Awards

Registration/Hospitality 9:00 AM to Noon

**NOTE: Activities with an \* are counted as Driving Events that qualify the participant to enter the Concours.**

## BOB'S YOUR UNCLE



Our Presidente was out of town for our last meeting at Pok-e-Joe's in Brodie Oaks Center. He had asked me to preside and I agreed, knowing that I was having arthroscopic knee surgery the day before. I was a little optimistic about my

ability to stand on crutches, so Bob Kramer agreed to stand in . . . . What a great club and great members! Once we got that sorted out, our first report was on the ever-present VTR Convention. Nel appealed to members to register as soon as possible as we would be using the registration money to support our expenditures. No, this is not a Ponzi scheme . . . your registration money will be put to good use! All major areas of responsibility are covered, but there is still opportunity for volunteers to help out. Everyone gave Terry and Jane Jones a big thank you for arranging the Stone Mountain Slalom that will take place at the VTR in their subdivision.

Greg Blake attended the last vintage race in College Station and took his first school with Bob Kramer's son Andrew. It's good to know that these two youngsters are carrying the flag in an aging sport. Greg reported in the last Ragtop about his efforts to have a running car in time – and he barely made it. He broke in his new engine in the first few slow laps of the track. Brave man. A good time was had by all and no breakdowns added to the fun. We look forward to many reports as Greg continues to tweak it.

Don Couch was able to send out a 16 page newsletter last month due to our switching over to email newsletters. More information

for no postage – how can you beat that? There were a few glitches with some people not receiving theirs, so he was going to do a follow-up email to try to catch everyone. Needless to say, it is important for everyone to keep Nel updated on any changes in their service providers.

In other news, Dean Mericus gave a report on the Wimberly Backwoods Tour and we discussed the upcoming Tour de Yoakum on March 29<sup>th</sup>. The Spokes Club has found a permanent home at the San Marcos airport and will not have to travel between Austin, San Antonio and all places in between. If you are interested in joining the fun, talk to Don Couch about how to get involved. Mike Jankowski brought his Dad with him for the first time and we were glad to have another veteran Triumph guy at our meeting. He says his days of pushing Triumphs is over and his son is on his own.

Long time member Harry Taggart just could not stay away from the thrill of owning a Triumph. He has purchased another California car on EBAY and brought it to the meeting for everyone to see. It is a very nice example of a 1969 TR6 with dual Weber carbs – says it drives really nice. Welcome home, Harry! In addition to Harry's car, other members bringing their Triumphs to the lot were: Willis Thorstadt, Dean and Elizabeth Mericas, Ron and Sam Dixon, Dan Julien, Johan Carl and Bob Baker. I'll see you at Rudy's on 620 on April 14<sup>th</sup>.

*Bob*

# 21<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL BLANCO CLASSIC CAR SHOW

SATURDAY MAY 16th, 2009

LOCATED IN THE BEAUTIFUL BLANCO STATE PARK  
On the grassy banks of the Blanco River  
BLANCO, TEXAS

Registration: 8:00am-11:00am ... Awards: 2:00pm  
OPEN TO ALL MODELS & TRUCKS

DASH PLAQUES & AWARDS  
\*TROPHIES\*

*PARK RANGER'S CHOICE-MAYOR'S CHOICE-BEST OF SHOW*

-----  
~-----  
\$25.00 PER ENTRY/ \$25.00 AT THE GATE- FREE DASH PLAQUE & T SHIRT  
(pay to: Blanco Classic Car Show)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ T-Shirt Size \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY DESCRIPTION

MAKE: \_\_\_\_\_ MODEL: \_\_\_\_\_  
YEAR: \_\_\_\_\_ COLOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
SPECIAL NOTES: \_\_\_\_\_

USE THIS FORM FOR PRE-REGISTRATION. MAIL TO:  
BENSON BODY & PAINT  
PO BOX683  
BIANCO, TEXAS 78606 (830)833 5348  
Email [meat.benson@txwinet.com](mailto:meat.benson@txwinet.com)

# FROM RUST TO RACE

**Greg Blake**

**More Pictures**



Checking valve geometry



TR3 conversion from rust bucket to CVAR group 4 vintage race car.



Dad's helper



Final rotating bits. Those are 87 mm Wiseco forged pistons and Eagle SIR rods designed for a Chevy 350 long rod setup. Ask me details if interested. Basically a bullet proof rod for this motor very cheap requires machining on crank and special spacers for pistons.



# MIKE'S FAVORITE TOOL

## APRIL TOOL OF THE MONTH

Full of hot air, you say? Well, that is exactly what it takes to keep these old British cars running! The serious shade tree mechanic cannot do without his trusty air compressor and all of its accessories.

Obviously, you have to have a compressor. Not those wimpy little portable jobs that kids use to air up their bicycles, but a real manly version that wakes up the neighbors when it kicks on in the middle of the night.

The great thing about air tools is that there are so many of them. You can go to Harbor Freight every Saturday for a year and not buy them all! Here is a short list of what I use the most:



Blower nozzle...Ever hear "blow out with compressed air" well this is the thing does it.

Pressure gauge/tire filler...real men ride bicycles too.

Spray gun...Makes painting a breeze, or fill with solvent and spray that dirt away.

Air ratchet...If you have ever removed and reinstalled an oil pan, this is the thing to have.



Angle drill...This drill really gets the job done, kind of reminds me of seeing my dentist.

Cut-off tool...This is like a Dremel tool on steroids and will cut through metal with ease.

Nail gun...this thing made the hammer obsolete.

Impact wrench...just like the guys use at your local tire shop to strip the threads on your lug nuts. No nut can stand up to the amazing torque this thing puts out, and that includes you!

Compressed air can be use to pressurize your master cylinder to bleed your brakes when the wife is to busy to help. It is great for sending brake cylinder pistons into low Earth orbit when disassembling them for a rebuild, or even for blowing up balloons for that stag party. The list goes on and on!

Of course, the main reason to own this stuff is that the sound made while using air tools impresses your buddies, and frightens the hell out of women and small children!

*Mike*



**Hill Country Triumph Club  
welcomes back these returning members**

Jim Haller  
1973 TR6  
Austin

Torf Torfason  
1959 TR3A  
Austin

**And welcome this new member:**

Jim Wells  
1974 TR6  
Morgans Point Resort

**CLASSIFIED**

**SPITFIRE 1500 PARTS -**

Engines, Transmissions, diffs,  
axels, doors, hoods, trunk lids,  
factory luggage racks, carbs,  
lights, switches, trim, glass,  
nuts, bolts AND washers!

Please call Don @ (512)-680-3540



# THE RAGTOP - APRIL 2009



## Calendar

**April 14th, 2009**

HCTC meeting - Poke-e-jo's BBQ  
Brodie Oaks Shopping Center

**April 22nd - 25th, 2009**

VTR Regionals - Marble Falls

**May 16th, 2009**

Blanco Classic Car Show



1105 N. Canyonwood Dr.  
Dripping Springs, TX 78620  
address change requested



The next Hill Country Triumph Club meeting will be held Tuesday, April 14, 7 PM,  
Rudy's Bar-B-Q, 7709 North FM 620, just north of RR 2222.  
Call 250-8002 for more info.